

Message Text

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TO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 265526

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR NATO CSCE BU

SUBJECT: U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO NATO RECORD KEEPING ON
WARSAW PACT CSCE IMPLEMENTATION

REFS: A) STATE 231043; B) SOFIA 2372

1. FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY SOFIA'S CHECKLIST (REF B)
SUITABLY EDITED FOR USE IN NATO RECORD KEEPING EFFORT ON
WARSAW PACT CSCE IMPLEMENTATION. YOU MAY PASS CHECKLIST TO
INTERNATIONAL STAFF.

2. WORKING CONDITIONS FOR US BUSINESSMEN.

A. ACCESS TO BUSINESS CONTACTS IS NARROW, AT FIRST
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USUALLY LIMITED TO FOREIGN TRADE ORGANIZATIONS. ACCESS TO
END-USERS OR RESEARCHERS TAKES TIME AND REPEAT CALLS;
OFTEN US BUSINESSMAN HIMSELF DOESN'T KNOW IF HE HAS MET
"RIGHT" PERSONS. INDIVIDUALS CHANGE POSITIONS AND

ORGANIZATIONS ARE REORGANIZED FREQUENTLY AND WITHOUT NOTICE, DESTROYING CONTINUITY OF CONTACT AND ADDING TO FRUSTRATION. IN SUM, BULGARIAN COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE KEEPS THE FOREIGN BUSINESSMAN AT ARM'S LENGTH, LIMITS HIS CONTACTS, AND WORKS TO KEEP HIM IGNORANT OF DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

B. POSSIBILITIES FOR ESTABLISHING PERMANENT OFFICES ARE ALMOST NIL. SHELL, BANK OF NAPLES, AND MITSUI HAVE REPRESENTATIVES WHOSE STATUS IS NOT ALTOGETHER CLEAR. LUFTHANSA AND BEA HAVE AIRLINE REPS IN SOFIA ON AN EXCHANGE BASIS WITH BALKANAIR. OTHER FIRMS HAVE BEEN OFFICIALLY DISCOURAGED FROM TRYING TO ESTABLISH REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES AND INSTEAD HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO INTERPRED, AN OFFICIAL BULGARIAN ORGANIZATION WHICH REPRESENTS WESTERN BUSINESSES. THOSE BUSINESSMEN WHO TRY TO STAY ON THEIR VISITOR'S VISAS AS LONG AS POSSIBLE CANNOT FIND OFFICE SPACE AND ARE GENERALLY REFUSED VISA EXTENSIONS.

C. HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS ARE TIGHT, COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVELY INADEQUATE, AND BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL PREMISES UNOBTAINABLE (SEE PART B). HOTEL SPACE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOMEWHAT INADEQUATE, BUT IS PARTICULARLY SO NOW WITH ONE MAJOR HOTEL CLOSED FOR REPAIRS. COMMUNICATIONS ARE SLOW BUT GENERALLY WORK; INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE EXCHANGES SEEM TO LACK PEOPLE WITH MUCH FOREIGN LANGUAGE CAPABILITY.

D. AVAILABILITY OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERICAL INFORMATION IS POOR. WHEN NOT CONSIDERED A STATE SECRET, IT IS USUALLY INCOMPLETE, INADEQUATE, AND SLOPPILY PREPARED. RESPONSES TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION ARE VERY SLOW, BUT LISTS OF FOREIGN TRADE ENTITIES AND INFORMATION ON FOREIGN TRADE LAWS ARE GENERALLY AVAILABLE. LISTS OF KEY OFFICIALS IN FOREIGN TRADE ENTITIES ARE NON-EXISTENT, AND OBTAINING SUCH INFORMATION IS EXTREMELY TIME-CONSUMING. ORGANIZATION CHARTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE. THERE ARE LARGE GAPS IN STATISTICAL INFORMATION, AND METHODS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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CALCULATION ARE NEVER EXPLAINED. ECONOMIC AND TRADE PROJECTIONS ARE RELEASED IRREGULARLY AND IN HAPHAZARD MANNER.

E. INFORMATION ON VARIETY AND NUMBER OF COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS WITH US AND OTHER WESTERN FIRMS IS SEVERELY LIMITED BY BULGARIAN SECRETIVENESS. NUMBER OF COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS DEPENDS ON HOW THEY ARE DEFINED, BUT EVEN MOST LIBERAL DEFINITION WOULD KEEP FIGURE WELL BELOW 100.

3. FAMILY MEETINGS AND REUNIFICATIONS.

A. CLEAR DISTINCTION MUST BE DRAWN BETWEEN BULGARIANS WISHING TO VISIT OR JOIN RELATIVES OR FRIENDS IN

WESTERN COUNTRIES WHO LEFT BULGARIA "LEGALLY" AND THOSE WHO LEFT UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERED ILLEGAL BY GOB. FORMER APPEAR TO BE ALLOWED RELATIVE FREEDOM OF TRAVEL; LATTER LARGELY COMPRISE "DIVIDED FAMILY" PROBLEM. DURING 12 MONTH PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 1, 1975, THE U.S. ISSUED 96 NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS TO BULGARIANS

TRAVELING TO VISIT RELATIVES WHO HAD LEFT BULGARIA LEGALLY. THERE WAS A SURGE DURING JULY AND AUGUST, BUT THIS IS SEASONAL AND THUS PROBABLY UNRELATED TO CSCE. OTHER WESTERN EMBASSIES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO PROVIDE COMPARABLE STATISTICS, BUT MOST AGREE THAT TRAVEL BY PERSONS IN THIS CLASSIFICATION APPEARS RELATIVELY FREE.

B. WITH EXCEPTION OF BI-NATIONAL MARRIAGE CASES, DISCUSSED MORE FULLY BELOW, THE U.S. DURING FIRST HALF 1975 ISSUED TWO IMMIGRANT VISAS TO BULGARIANS TO JOIN SPONSORS BOTH OF WHOM HAD LEFT BULGARIA LEGALLY.

C. BULGARIANS DISTINGUISH BETWEEN SOCIALIST AND NON-SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, BUT OTHERWISE EMBASSY DISCERN NO SIGNIFICANT DISCRIMINATION AS REGARDS TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND VISAS ACCORDING TO COUNTRY OF DESTINATION OR ORIGIN.

D. THE U.S. HAS NO RECENT EVIDENCE THAT APPLICANTS ACTUALLY SUFFER PENALTIES OR DISCRIMINATION, BUT DOES NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY SANCTIONS MAY EXIST. IN ANY CASE, FEAR THAT SUCH DIFFICULTIES MAY ARISE NO DOUBT INHIBITS APPLICANTS.

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E. STANDARD CHARGES FOR PERMANENT DEPARTURE APPLICATIONS INCLUDE A 5 LEVA APPLICATION FEE; 85 LEVA PASSPORT FEE, AND APPROXIMATELY 20 LEVA FOR ADDITIONAL EXPENSES SUCH AS COPIES OF DOCUMENTS, AUTHENTICATIONS AND NOTARIAL SERVICES. (DOLS 1.00 EQUALS 1.20 BULGARIAN LEVA.) CHARGES FOR TEMPORARY DEPARTURE DOCUMENTATION ARE SOMEWHAT LESS.

F. RESTRICTIONS ON MOVEMENT OF PERSONS HOLDING VALID VISITORS' VISAS INVOLVE ONLY THE USUAL REGISTRATION WITH POLICE FOR ANY OVERNIGHT STAY AND REQUIREMENT FOR SPECIAL PERMISSION TO ENTER BORDER AREAS. THESE ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME RESTRICTIONS ON GENERAL POPULATION AND NOT EXCESSIVELY INHIBITING. SPECIAL DISPENSATION IS REQUIRED TO ENTER CERTAIN AREAS, MOSTLY ALONG BORDER, BUT IS GENERALLY FORTHCOMING IN BONA FIDE CASES.

G. CASES OF EMERGENCY TRAVEL TO VISIT RELATIVES WHO HAVE LEFT BULGARIA LEGALLY ARE HANDLED ON A PRIORITY BASIS. IN A SINGLE RECENT EXPERIENCE, TRAVEL PERMISSION AND DOCUMENTATION WAS ISSUED IN FOUR DAYS AS OPPOSED TO 60 TO 90 DAYS NORMALLY REQUIRED. ON BASIS OF EXISTING KNOWLEDGE, AN EMERGENCY OR HUMANITARIAN SITUATION HAS NEVER BEEN CONSIDERED BY BULGARIAN

AUTHORITIES TO BE AMELIORATING FACTOR WHEN PERSON TO BE VISITED LEFT BULGARIA ILLEGALLY.

H. TO BEST OF U.S. KNOWLEDGE THERE IS NO LIMITATION ON SHIPMENT OF HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL EFFECTS ONCE EXIT PERMISSION HAS BEEN OBTAINED.

4. BINATIONAL MARRIAGES.

A. DURING FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1975, THERE WERE SIX MARRIAGES BETWEEN AMERICAN MALES AND BULGARIAN FEMALES, AND U.S. IS AWARE OF THREE PENDING CASES. BULGARIAN AUTHORITIES RAISE NO OBSTACLES TO SUCH MARRIAGES UNLESS THERE IS A COMPLICATING FACTOR SUCH AS UNPAID "DEBT" TO THE GOB (NORMALLY INCURRED THROUGH PROVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION) OR WHEN A MEMBER OF HUSBAND'S OR WIFE'S FAMILY LEFT BULGARIA ILLEGALLY. ACCORDING TO OTHER WESTERN SOURCES, MARRIAGES BETWEEN BULGARIAN MEN AND FOREIGN WOMEN ARE NOT PROHIBITED BUT ARE STRONGLY DISCOURAGED, AND WHEN ALLOWED BULGARIAN HUSBAND IS USUALLY NOT GIVEN PERMISSION TO JOIN HIS WIFE IN A CONFIDENTIAL

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FOREIGN COUNTRY. EMBASSY HAS HAD NO CASES OF AMERICAN WOMEN MARRYING BULGARIAN MEN.

B. THE COMMENTS UNDER PARA 3, FAMILY MEETINGS AND REUNIFICATIONS, APPLY.

5. TRAVEL FOR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL REASONS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED GOB PURSUES CLEAR, INTENTIONAL, AND FOR MOST PART SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN TO LIMIT ACCESS OF BULGARIANS TO FOREIGN EMBASSIES. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH USE OF POLICE "GUARDS" WHO DISCOURAGE VISITS BY BULGARIANS AND THROUGH INSTRUCTIONS TO CITIZENS TO APPLY FOR FOREIGN VISAS THROUGH BULGARIAN MFA.

A. FOLLOWING FIGURES ARE FOR FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1975 AND INCLUDE BULGARIAN NATIONALS ONLY:

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|----------------------------------|-----|
| US VISAS FOR PERSONAL TRAVEL | 91 |
| US VISAS FOR OFFICIAL GOB TRAVEL | 27 |
| US VISAS FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL | 120 |

NO NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS WERE REFUSED TO BULGARIAN APPLICANTS DURING THIS PERIOD.

B. THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE TOWARD SIMPLIFICATION AND FLEXIBILITY IN ADMINISTRATION OF EXIT AND ENTRY PROCESSES WITH EXCEPTION THAT, WITH ENTERING INTO FORCE OF AMERICAN-BULGARIAN CONSULAR AGREEMENT ON MAY 28, 1975, BULGARIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE AGREED TO CONSIDER POSSESSION OF VALID US PASSPORT CONTAINING VALID BULGARIAN VISA OBTAINED OUTSIDE BULGARIA AS PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE OF PRIMACY OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP IN POTENTIAL DUAL NATIONAL CASES.

C. THERE HAS BEEN NO EASING OF REGULATIONS CONCERNING MOVEMENT OF AMERICANS WITHIN BULGARIA.

D. IN NOVEMBER 1974, GOB PROMULGATED A NEW SCHEDULE OF FEES AND MONETARY REQUIREMENTS FOR VISITORS AND TOURISTS TO BULGARIA WHICH, ALONG WITH A REVALUATION OF THE LEVA, SUBSTANTIALLY RAISED COST OF BULGARIAN VISAS AND REQUIRES TOURISTS TO EXCHANGE MINIMUM OF 10 US

DOLLARS OR EQUIVALENT HARD CURRENCY FOR EACH DAY OF STAY IN BULGARIA.

6. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.
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A. NO US NEWSPAPERS OR MAGAZINES ARE OFFERED FOR PUBLIC SALE, NOT EVEN "THE WORLD." NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES FROM OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES SOLD PUBLICLY ARE LIMITED TO COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATIONS. THERE IS VERY LIMITED DIRECT IMPORT OF US AND WESTERN BOOKS, MOSTLY TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS ON DIRECT, INDIVIDUAL ORDER.

B. THOSE WESTERN COMMUNIST NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES DESCRIBED ABOVE ARE SOLD IN HOTELS CATERING TO FOREIGN VISITORS. THERE ARE WESTERN PUBLICATIONS IN SOME PUBLIC LIBRARIES, BUT ACCESS REQUIRES A "LIBRARY CARD" WHICH MEANS THAT READERS HAVE TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES, WHICH SERVES TO DISCOURAGE ACCESS. ALSO, SOME PUBLICATIONS ARE GIVEN ONLY TO HOLDERS OF SPECIAL CARDS. IN ADDITION, SOME INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARIES MAINTAIN WESTERN PUBLICATIONS FOR CLEARED STAFF MEMBERS.

C. POSSIBILITY OF SUBSCRIPTIONS TO WESTERN PUBLICATIONS DOES NOT EXIST FOR GENERAL PUBLIC. APPARENTLY OFFICIALS ABOVE A CERTAIN LEVEL AND SPECIALISTS AND TECHNICIANS IN GIVEN FIELDS HAVE ACCESS TO SUBSCRIPTIONS ON A "NEED TO KNOW" BASIS.

D. WESTERN FILMS SHOWN ARE LIMITED AND TEND TO BE THOSE WHICH WILL PORTRAY WEST, PARTICULARLY US, IN TERMS OF STEREOTYPED COMMUNIST CONCEPTS, E.G. DEGENERATE AND DEPRAVED. EXAMPLES ARE "MIDNIGHT COWBOY" AND "THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?". BULGARIAN TV OCCASIONALLY HAS NON-CONTROVERSIAL AND "HARMLESS" WESTERN ADVENTURE OR HISTORICAL FICTION FILMS AND HAS ALSO RUN SOME NOTED WESTERN CULTURAL SERIES, E.G. "AGE OF KINGS" AND KENNETH CLARK'S "CIVILIZATION".

E. ONLY RFE BULGARIAN BROADCASTS ARE NOW JAMMED.

F. THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO SUCCESS IN PLACEMENT OF US FILMS, TV MATERIAL, AND RADIO ITEMS (OR PRESS MATERIAL, FOR THAT MATTER).

7. WORKING CONDITIONS FOR US JOURNALISTS.

A. NO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS ARE PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED IN BULGARIA, AND VISITS BY AMERICAN NEWSMEN ARE INFREQUENT, E.G., APPROXIMATELY FOUR SUCH VISITS DURING PAST YEAR. THE U.S. HAS NO RECORD OF ANY REJECTION OF VISAS FOR AMERICAN JOURNALISTS.

B. MULTIPLE ENTRY-EXIT VISAS ARE NOT ACCORDED. HOWEVER,
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THE U.S. IS NOT AWARE OF ANY HAVING BEEN REQUESTED.
C. THE U.S. IS NOT AWARE OF ANY FORMAL RESTRICTIONS
ON JOURNALISTS' TRAVEL.

D. ACCESS TO OFFICIAL SOURCES IS CONTROLLED AND
LIMITED, IN PART THROUGH PRACTICE THAT APPOINTMENTS MUST
BE MADE THROUGH SOFIA PRESS, AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION
AGENCY. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THERE IS LACK OF INTEREST OR
RELUCTANCE ON PART OF OFFICIALS IN MEETING AMERICAN
JOURNALISTS. INTERVIEWS ACCORDED ARE LIKELY TO BE VERY
GENERAL, GUARDED, AND WARY. THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO
ACCESS TO PRIVATE SOURCES.

E. ONLY PRINT REPORTERS HAVE VISITED BULGARIA
RECENTLY, SO QUESTION OF EQUIPMENT HAS NOT ARISEN.

F. TO U.S. KNOWLEDGE, ONLY VOA CORRESPONDENT HAS
ATTEMPTED TO SEND STORIES DIRECTLY FROM BULGARIA
RECENTLY. HE WAS NOT HINDERED, BUT WAS CHARGED MORE
THAN DOLS 200 PER "FEED".

G. NO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN EXPELLED.

8. CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES.
BULGARIANS HAVE EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR INCREASE IN
EXCHANGES, PRIMARILY IN SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL FIELDS.
BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH US IS NOW BEING NEGOTIATED.
SIMILAR BILATERAL AGREEMENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN REACHED
WITH MANY WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.
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